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December 4, 2018

The Honorable Hank Vaupel
Chairman, House Health Policy Committee
Post Office Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Chairman Vaupel and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Michigan State Medical Society, which represents 15,000 physician members collectively serving a million patients statewide, I want to thank you for your consideration of House Bills 4134 and 4135, sponsored by Representative Ed Canfield.

As you are aware, maintenance of certification has become a costly and onerous process for physicians that lacks the evidence to suggest it improves quality of care for patients in Michigan. Singularly utilizing such groundless mechanisms that restrict the ability of qualified physicians to practice medicine and serve patients only exacerbates our state's ongoing challenges related to access to care. That is why our members have elevated this issue and it has become a key priority for the medical society.

That said, we appreciate the willingness of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan to work with us to find a compromise on the underlying legislation. The changes you will consider today are a result of those good faith negotiations, which will focus the thrust of the legislation on those specialties where our state is experiencing the most acute physician shortages, namely the primary care specialties of family medicine, internal medicine and pediatrics. While we support the bills as introduced, we believe the changes negotiated are a good start and will put us on the right path to achieving the best outcome for our state.

We appreciate your thoughtful consideration and ask for your support of House Bills 4134 and 4135. Should you have any questions, please contact MSMS Director of State and Federal Government Relations, Christin Nohner, at cnohner@msms.org or 517-336-5737.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Betty L. Chu". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Betty" and last name "Chu" clearly legible.

Betty Chu, MD, MBA
President, Michigan State Medical Society